

- Group III: Claims 18-21, drawn to a method of preparing a beating heart, classified in class 606, subclass 194;
- Group IV: Claims 22-26, drawn to an apparatus for cutting a suture, classified in class 606, subclass 228; and
- Group V: Claims 27-29, drawn to a method for repairing a damaged heart valve, classified in class 606, subclass 232.

In addition, if Group I is elected, the Examiner further required Applicant to select a single disclosed species: Species I: Figs 1, 1a and Species II: Figs 2, 2a.

For the purpose of examination of the present application, Applicant elects, with traverse, Group I, Claims 1-15, species II, Figs 2, 2a for further prosecution at this time.

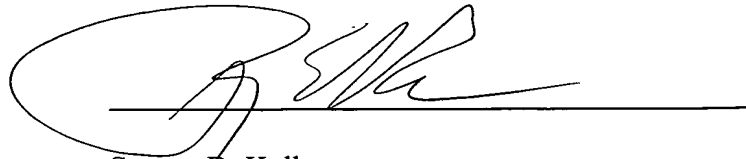
The basis for Applicant's traversal is that there is no undue burden on the Examiner. All of the claims of the present application are searchable within the surgical art and, as such, overlapping areas of search for the different Groups designated by the Restriction Requirement and the Election of Species Requirement are likely. Reconsideration of the Restriction Requirement and the Election of Species Requirement is respectfully requested.

However, in the event that the Examiner chooses not to rejoin and consider all claims of the present application, Applicant reserves the right to file one or more divisional applications to the non-elected subject matter, if he so wishes.

Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for examination on the merits. Early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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